

Wah, the Oafis Magna of antiquity, and fo into the great Defert of Selima.

THREE miles beyond Siout, the wind turned directly fouth, fo we were obliged to ftay at Tima the reft of the 20th. I was wearied with continuing in the boat, and went on fhore at Tima. It is a fmall town, furrounded like the reft with groves of palm-trees. Below Tima is Bandini, three miles on the eaft fide. The Nile is here full of fandy iflands. Thofe that the inundation has firft left are all fown, thefe are chiefly on the eaft. The others on the weft were barren and uncultivated; all of them moftly compofed of fand.

I WALKED into the defert behind the village, and fhoot a confiderable number of the bird called Gooto, and feveral hares likewife, fo that I fent one of my fervants loaded to the boat. I then walked down paff a fmall village called Nizelet el Himma, and returned by a ftill fmall one called Shuka, about a quarter of a mile from Tima. I was exceedingly fatigued with the heat by the fouth wind \* blowing, and the deep fand on the fide of the mountain. I was then beginning my apprenticeship, which I fully compleated.

THE people in thefe villages were in appearance little lefs miserable than thofe of the villages we had paffed. They feemed shy and furly at firft, but, upon converfation, became placid enough. I bought fome medals from them of no value, and my fervants telling them I was a phyfician, I gave my advice to feveral of the fick. This reconciled them

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\* It is called Hamfeen, becaufe it is expected to blow all Pentecoft.

them perfectly, they brought me fresh water and some sugar-canes, which they split and steeped in it. If they were satisfied, I was very much so. They told me of a large scene of ruins that was about four miles distant, and offered to send a person to conduct me, but I did not accept their offer, as I was to pass there next day.

THE 21<sup>st</sup>, in the morning, we came to Gawa, where is the second scene of ruins of Egyptian architecture, after leaving Cairo. I immediately went on shore, and found a small temple of three columns in front, with the capitals entire, and the columns in several separate pieces. They seemed by that, and their slight proportions, to be of the most modern of that species of building; but the whole were covered with hieroglyphics, the old story over again, the hawk and the serpent, the man sitting with the dog's head, with the perch, or measuring-rod; in one hand, the hemisphere and globes with wings, and leaves of the banana-tree, as is supposed, in his other. The temple is filled with rubbish and dung of cattle, which the Arabs bring in here to shelter them from the heat.

Mr NORDEN says, that these are the remains of the ancient Diospolis Parva, but, though very loth to differ from him, and without the least desire of criticising, I cannot here be of his opinion. For Ptolemy, I think, makes Diospolis Parva about lat.  $26^{\circ} 40'$ , and Gawa is  $27^{\circ} 20'$ , which is by much too great a difference. Besides, Diospolis and its nome were far to the southward of Panopolis; but we shall shew, by undoubted evidence, that Gawa is to the northward.

THERE are two villages of this name opposite to each other; the one Gawa Shergieh, which means the Eastern Gawa, and this is by much the largest; the other Gawa Garbieh. Several authors, not knowing the meaning of these terms, call it Gawa Gebery; a word that has no signification whatever, but Garbieh means the Western.

I WAS very well pleased to see here, for the first time, two shepherd dogs lapping up the water from the stream, then lying down in it with great seeming leisure and satisfaction. It refuted the old fable, that the dogs living on the banks of the Nile run as they drink, for fear of the crocodile.

ALL around the villages of Gawa Garbieh, and the plantations belonging to them, Meshta and Raany, with theirs also joining them (that is, all the west side of the river) are cultivated and sown from the very foot of the mountains to the water's edge, the grain being thrown upon the mud as soon as ever the water has left it. The wheat was at this time about four inches in length.

WE passed three villages, Shaftour, Commawhaia, and Zinedi; we anchored off Shaftour, and within sight of Taahta. Taahta is a large village, and in it are several mosques. On the east is a mountain called Jibbel Heredy, from a Turkish saint, who was turned into a snake, has lived several hundred years, and is to live for ever. As Christians, Moors, and Turks, all faithfully believe in this, the consequence is, that abundance of nonsense is daily writ and told concerning it. Mr Norden discusses it at large, and afterwards gravely tells us, he does not believe it; in which I certainly

must heartily join him, and recommend to my readers to do the same, without reading any thing about it.

ON the 22d, at night, we arrived at Achmim. I landed my quadrant and instruments, with a view of observing an eclipse of the moon; but, immediately after her rising, clouds and mist so effectually covered the whole heavens, that it was not even possible to catch a star of any size passing the meridian.

ACHMIM is a very considerable place. It belonged once to an Arab prince of that name, who possessed it by a grant from the Grand Signior, for a certain revenue to be paid yearly. That family is now extinct; and another Arab prince, Hamam Shekh of Fushout, now rents it for his life-time, from the Grand Signior, with all the country (except Girgé) from Siout to Luxor.

THE inhabitants of Achmim are of a very yellow, unhealthy appearance, probably owing to the bad air, occasioned by a very dirty calish that passes through the town. There are, likewise, a great many trees, bushes, and gardens, about the stagnated water, all which increase the bad quality of the air.

THERE is here what is called a Hospice, or Convent of religious Franciscans, for the entertainment of the converts, or persecuted Christians in Nubia, *when they can find them*. This institution I speak of at large in the sequel. One of the last princes of the house of Medicis, all patrons of learning, proposed to furnish them with a compleat observatory, with the most perfect and expensive instruments; but they refused.



refused them, from a scruple least it would give umbrage to the natives. The fear that it should expose their own ignorance and idleness, I must think, entered a little into the consideration.

THEY received us civilly, and that was just all. I think I never knew a number of priests met together, who differed so little in capacity and knowledge, having barely a routine of scholastic disputation, on every other subject inconceivably ignorant. But I understood afterwards, that they were low men, all Italians; some of them had been barbers, and some of them tailors at Milan; they affected to be all Anti-Copernicans, upon scripture principles, for they knew no other astronomy.

THESE priests lived in great ease and safety, were much protected and favoured by this Arab prince Hamam; and their acting as physicians reconciled them to the people. They told me there were about eight hundred catholics in the town, but I believe the fifth part of that number would never have been found, even such catholics as they are. The rest of them were Cophts, and Moors, but a very few of the latter, so that the missionaries live perfectly unmolested.

THERE was a manufactory of coarse cotton cloth in the town, to considerable extent; and great quantity of poultry, esteemed the best in Egypt, was bred here, and sent down to Cairo. The reason is plain, the great export from Achmim is wheat; all the country about it is sown with that grain, and the crops are superior to any in Egypt. Thirty-two grains pulled from the ear was equal to forty-nine of the best Barbary wheat

gathered in the same season; a prodigious disproportion, if it holds throughout. The wheat, however, was not much more forward in Upper Egypt, than that lower down the country, or farther northward. It was little more than four inches high, and sown down to the very edge of the water.

THE people *here* wisely pursuing agriculture, so as to produce wheat in the greatest quantity, have dates only about their houses, and a few plantations of sugar cane near their gardens. As soon as they have reaped their wheat, they sow for another crop, before the sun has drained the moisture from the ground. Great plenty of excellent fish is caught here at Achmim, particularly a large one called the Binny, a figure of which I have given in the Appendix. I have seen them about four feet long, and one foot and a half broad.

THE people seemed to be very peaceable, and well disposed, but of little curiosity. They expressed not the least surprise at seeing my large quadrant and telescopes mounted. We passed the night in our tent upon the river side, without any sort of molestation, though the men are reproached with being very great thieves. But seeing, I suppose, by our lights, that we were awake, they were afraid.

THE women seldom marry after sixteen; we saw several with child, who they said were not eleven years old. Yet I did not observe that the men were less in size, less vigorous and active in body, than in other places. This, one would not imagine from the appearance these young wives make. They are little better coloured than a corpse, and  
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look older at sixteen, than many English women at sixty, so that you are to look for beauty here in childhood only.

ACHMIM appears to be the Panopolis of the ancients, not only by its latitude, but also by an inscription of a very large triumphal arch, a few hundred yards south of the convent. It is built with marble by the Emperor Nero, and is dedicated in a Greek inscription, ΠΑΝΙ ΘΕΩ. The columns that were in its front are broken and thrown away; the arch itself is either sunk into the ground, or overturned on the side, with little separation of the several pieces.

THE 24th of December we left Achmim, and came to the village Shekh Ali on the west, two miles and a quarter distant. We then passed Hamdi, about the same distance farther south; Aboudarac and Salladi on the east; then Salladi Garbieh, and Salladi Shergieh on the east and west, as the names import; and a number of villages, almost opposite, on each side of the river.

At three o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at Girgé, the largest town we had seen since we left Cairo; which, by the latitude Ptolemy has very rightly placed it in, should be the Diospolis Parva, and not Gawa, as Mr Norden makes it. For this we know is the beginning of the Diospolitan nome, and is near a remarkable crook of the Nile, as it should be. It is also on the western side of the river, as Diospolis was, and at a proper distance from Dendera, the ancient Tentyra, a mark which cannot be mistaken.

THE Nile makes a kind of loop here; is very broad, and the current strong. We passed it with a wind at north; but  
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the waves ran high as in the ocean. All the country, on both sides of the Nile, to Girgé, is but one continued grove of palm-trees, in which are several villages a small distance from each other, Doulani, Confaed, Deirout, and Berdis, on the west side; Welled Hallifi, and Beni Haled, on the east.

THE villages have all a very picturesque appearance among the trees, from the many pigeon-houses that are on the tops of them. The mountains on the east begin to depart from the river, and those on the west to approach nearer it. It seems to me, that, soon, the greatest part of Egypt on the east side of the Nile, between Achmim and Cairo, will be desert; not from the rising of the ground by the mud, as is supposed, but from the quantity of sand from the mountains, which covers the mould or earth several feet deep. This 24th of December, at night, we anchored between two villages, Beliani and Mobanniny.

NEXT morning, the 25th, impatient to visit the greatest, and most magnificent scene of ruins that are in Upper Egypt, we set out from Beliani, and, about ten o'clock in the forenoon, arrived at Dendera. Although we had heard that the people of this place were the very worst in Egypt, we were not very apprehensive. We had two letters from the Bey, to the two principal men there, commanding them, as they would answer with their lives and fortunes, to have a special care that no mischief befel us; and likewise a very pressing letter to Shekh Hamam at Furfhout, in whose territory we were.

I PITCHED my tent by the river side, just above our bark, and sent a message to the two principal people, first to the  
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one, then to the other, desiring them to send a proper person, for I had to deliver to them the commands of the Bey. I did not choose to trust these letters with our boatman; and Dendera is near half a mile from the river. The two men came after some delay, and brought each of them a sheep; received the letters, went back with great speed, and, soon after, returned with a horse and three asses, to carry me to the ruins.

DENDERA is a considerable town at this day, all covered with thick groves of palm-trees, the same that Juvenal describes it to have been in his time. Juvenal himself must have seen it, at least once, in passing, as he himself died in a kind of honourable exile at Syene, whilst in command there.

*Terga fugæ celeri, præstantibus omnibus instant,  
Qui vicina colunt umbrosæ Tentyra palmæ.*

JUV. SAT. 15. v. 75.

THIS place is governed by a cacheff appointed by Shekh Hamam. A mile south of the town, are the ruins of two temples, one of which is so much buried under ground, that little of it is to be seen; but the other, which is by far the most magnificent, is entire, and accessible on every side. It is also covered with hieroglyphics, both within and without, all in relief; and of every figure, simple and compound, that ever has been published, or called an hieroglyphic.

THE form of the building is an oblong square, the ends of which are occupied by two large apartments, or vestibules, supported by monstrous columns, all covered with hieroglyphics.

hieroglyphics likewise. Some are in form of men and beasts ; some seem to be the figures of instruments of sacrifice, while others, in a smaller size, and less distinct form, seem to be inscriptions in the current hand of hieroglyphics, of which I shall speak at large afterwards. They are all finished with great care.

THE capitals are of one piece, and consist of four huge human heads, placed back to back against one another, with bat's ears, and an ill-imagined, and worse-executed, fold of drapery between them.

ABOVE these is a large oblong square block, still larger than the capitals, with four flat fronts, disposed like pannels, that is, with a kind of square border round the edges, while the faces and fronts are filled with hieroglyphics ; as are the walls and cielings of every part of the temple. Between these two apartments in the extremities, there are three other apartments, resembling the first, in every respect, only that they are smaller.

THE whole building is of common white stone, from the neighbouring mountains, only those two in which have been sunk the piers for hanging the outer doors, (for it seems they had doors even in those days) are of granite, or black and blue porphyry.

THE top of the temple is flat, the spouts to carry off the water are monstrous heads of sphinxes ; the globes with wings, and the two serpents, with a kind of shield or breast-plate between them, are here frequently repeated, such as we see them on the Carthaginian medals.

THE hieroglyphics have been painted over, and great part of the colouring yet remains upon the stones, red, in all its shades, especially that dark dusky colour called Tyrian Purple; yellow, very fresh; sky-blue (that is, near the blue of an eastern sky, several shades lighter than ours; green of different shades; these are all the colours preserved.

I COULD discover no vestiges of common houses in Dendera more than in any other of the great towns in Egypt. I suppose the common houses of the ancients, in these warm countries, were constructed of very slight materials, after they left their caves in the mountains. There was indeed no need for any other. Not knowing the regularity of the Nile's inundation, they never could be perfectly secure in their own minds against the deluge; and this slight structure of private buildings seems to be the reason so few ruins are found in the many cities once built in Egypt. If there ever were any other buildings, they must be now covered with the white sand from the mountains, for the whole plain to the foot of these is overflowed, and in cultivation. It was no part, either of my plan or inclination, to enter into the detail of this extraordinary architecture. Quantity, and solidity, are two principal circumstances that are seen there, with a vengeance.

It strikes and imposes on you, at first sight, but the impressions are like those made by the size of mountains, which the mind does not retain for any considerable time after seeing them; I think, a very ready hand might spend six months, from morning to night, before he could copy the hieroglyphics in the inside of the temple. They are, however, in several combinations, which have not appeared

in the collection of hieroglyphics. I wonder that, being in the neighbourhood, as we are, of Lycopolis, we never see a wolf as an hieroglyphic; and nothing, indeed, but what has some affinity to water; yet the wolf is upon all the medals, from which I apprehend that the worship of the wolf was but a modern superstition.

DENDERA stands on the edge of a small, but fruitful plain; the wheat was thirteen inches high, now at Christmas; their harvest is in the end of March. The valley is not above five miles wide, from mountain to mountain. Here we first saw the Doom-tree in great profusion growing among the palms, from which it scarcely is distinguishable at a distance. It is the \* *Palma Thebaica Cuciofera*. Its stone is like that of a peach covered with a black bitter pulp, which resembles a walnut over ripe.

A LITTLE before we came to Dendera we saw the first crocodile, and afterwards hundreds, lying upon every island, like large flocks of cattle, yet the inhabitants of Dendera drive their beasts of every kind into the river, and they stand there for hours. The girls and women too, that come to fetch water in jars, stand up to their knees in the water for a considerable time; and if we guess by what happens, their danger is full as little as their fear, for none of them, that ever I heard of, had been bit by a crocodile. However, if the Denderites were as keen and expert hunters of Crocodiles, as some † historians tell us they were formerly, there is surely no part in the Nile where they would have better sport than here, immediately before their own city.

HAVING

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\* Theophrast. Hist. Plan. lib. iii. cap. 8—lib. iv. cap. 2. † Strabo lib. vii. p. 941.



HAVING made some little acknowledgment to those who had conducted me through the ruins in great safety, I returned to the Canja, or rather to my tent, which I placed in the first firm ground. I saw, at some distance, a well-dressed man, with a white turban, and yellow shawl covering it, and a number of ill-looking people about him. As I thought this was some quarrel among the natives, I took no notice of it, but went to my tent, in order to rectify my quadrant for observation.

As soon as our Rais saw me enter my tent, he came with expressions of very great indignation. "What signifies it, said he, that you are a friend to the Bey, have letters to every body, and are at the door of Furfhout, if yet here is a man that will take your boat away from you?"

"SOFTLY, softly, I answered, Hassan, he may be in the right. If Ali Bey, Shekh Hamam, or any body want a boat for public service, I must yield mine. Let us hear."

SHEKH Hamam and Ali Bey! says he; why it is a fool, an idiot, and an afs; a fellow that goes begging about, and says he is a faint; but he is a natural fool, full as much knave as fool however; he is a thief, I know him to be a thief."

IF he is a faint, said I, Hagi Hassan, as you are another, known to be so all the world over, I don't see why I should interfere; faint against faint is a fair battle."—"It is the Cadi, replies he, and no one else."

"COME away with me, said I, Hassan, and let us see this cadi; if it is the cadi, it is not the fool, it may be the knave."

HE was fitting upon the ground on a carpet, moving his head backwards and forwards, and saying prayers with beads in his hand. I had no good opinion of him from his first appearance, but said, *Salam alicum*, boldly; this seemed to offend him, as he looked at me with great contempt, and gave me no answer, though he appeared a little disconcerted by my confidence.

"ARE you the *Cafr*, said he, to whom that boat belongs?"

"No, Sir, said I, it belongs to Hagi Haffan."

"Do you think, says he, I call Hagi Haffan, who is a Sher-riffe, *Cafr*?"

"THAT depends upon the measure of your prudence, said I, of which as yet I have no proof that can enable me to judge or decide."

"ARE you the *Christian* that was at the ruins in the morning? says he."

"I was at the ruins in the morning, replied I, and *I am a Christian*. Ali Bey calls that denomination of people *Nazarani*, that is the Arabic of Cairo and Constantinople, and I understand no other."

"I am, said he, going to Girgé, and this holy saint is with me, and there is no boat but your's bound that way, for which reason I have promised to take him with me."

By this time the *faint* had got into the boat, and far forward ; he was an ill-favoured, low, sick-like man, and seemed to be almost blind.

You should not make rash promises, said I to the *cadi*, for this one you made you never can perform ; I am not going to Girgé. Ali Bey, *whose slave you are*, gave me this boat, but told me, I was not to ship either faints or *cadies*. There is my boat, go a-board if you dare ; and you, Hagi Haffan, let me see you lift an oar, or loose a sail, either for the *cadi* or the faint, if I am not with them.

I WENT to my tent, and the Rais followed me. “ Hagi Haffan, said I, there is a proverb in my country, It is better to flatter fools than to fight them : Cannot you go to the fool, and give him half-a-crown ? will he take it, do you think, and abandon his journey to Girgé ? afterwards leave me to settle with the *cadi* for his voyage thither.”

“ He will take it with all his heart, he will kiss your hand for half-a-crown, says Haffan.”

“ LET him have half-a-crown from me, said I, and desire him to go about his business, and intimate that I give him it in charity, at same time expect compliance with the condition.”

IN the interim, a Christian Copht came into the tent : “ Sir, said he, you don’t know what you are doing ; the *cadi* is a great man, give him his present, and have done with him.”

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“WHEN he behaves better, it will be time enough for that, said I?—If you are a friend of his, advise him to be quiet, before an order comes from Cairo by a Serach, and carries him thither. Your countryman Risk would not give me the advice you do?”

RISK! says he; Do you know Risk? Is not that Risk's writing, said I, shewing him a letter from the Bey? Wallah! (by God) it is, says he, and away he went without speaking a word farther.

THE faint had taken his half-crown, and had gone away singing, it being now near dark.—The cadi went away, and the mob dispersed, and we directed a Moor to cry, That all people should, in the night-time, keep away from the tent, or they would be fired at; a stone or two were afterwards thrown, but did not reach us.

I FINISHED my observation, and ascertained the latitude of Dendera, then packed up my instruments, and sent them on board.

MR NORDEN seems greatly to have mistaken the position of this town, which, conspicuous and celebrated as it is by ancient authors, and justly a principal point of attention to modern travellers, he does not so much as describe; and, in his map, he places Dendera twenty or thirty miles to the southward of Badjoura; whereas it is about nine miles to the northward. For Badjoura is in lat.  $26^{\circ} 3'$ , and Dendera is in  $26^{\circ} 10'$ .



It is a great pity, that he who had a taste for this very remarkable kind of architecture, should have passed it, both in going up and coming down ; as it is, beyond comparison, a place that would have given more satisfaction than all Upper Egypt.

WHILE we were striking our tent, a great mob came down, but without the *cadi*. As I ordered all my people to take their arms in their hands, they kept at a very considerable distance ; but the fool, or faint, got into the boat with a yellow flag in his hand, and sat down at the foot of the main-mast, saying, with an idiot smile, That we should fire, for he was out of the reach of the shot ; some stones were thrown, but did not reach us.

I ORDERED two of my servants with large brass ship-blunderbusses, very bright and glittering, to get upon the top of the cabin. I then pointed a wide-mouthed Swedish blunderbuss from one of the windows, and cried out, Have a care ;—the next stone that is thrown I fire my cannon amongst you, which will sweep away 300 of you instantly from the face of the earth ; though I believe there were not above two hundred then present.

I ORDERED Hagi Hassan to cast off his cord immediately, and, as soon as the blunderbuss appeared, away ran every one of them, and, before they could collect themselves to return, our vessel was in the middle of the stream. The wind was fair, though not very fresh, on which we set both our sails, and made great way.

THE faint, who had been finging all the time we were disputing, began now to shew some apprehensions for his own safety : He asked Hagi Hassan, if this was the way to Girgé? and had for answer, "Yes, it is the fool's way to " Girgé."

WE carried him about a mile, or more, up the river ; then a convenient landing-place offering, I asked him whether he got my money, or not, last night? He said, he had for yesterday, but he had got none for to-day.—"Now, the next thing I have to ask you, said I, is, Will you go ashore of your own accord, or will you be thrown into the Nile? He answered with great confidence, Do you know, that, at my word, I can fix your boat to the bottom of the Nile, and make it grow a tree there for ever?" "Aye, says Hagi Hassan, and make oranges and lemons grow on it likewise, can't you? You are a cheat." "Come, Sirs, said I, lose no time, put him out." I thought he had been blind and weak ; and the boat was not within three feet of the shore, when placing one foot upon the gunnel, he leaped clean upon land.

WE flacked our vessel down the stream a few yards, filling our sails, and stretching away. Upon seeing this, our faint fell into a desperate passion, cursing, blaspheming, and stamping with his feet, at every word crying "Shar Ullah!" *i. e.* may God fend, and do justice. Our people began to taunt and gibe him, asking him if he would have a pipe of tobacco to warm him, as the morning was very cold ; but I bade them be content. It was curious to see him, as far as we could discern, sometimes sitting down, sometimes jumping and skipping about, and waving his flag, then running  
about

about a hundred yards, as if it were after us ; but always returning, though at a slower pace.

NONE of the rest followed. He was indeed apparently the tool of that rascal the *cadi*, and, after his designs were frustrated, nobody cared what became of him. He was left in the lurch, as those of his character generally are, after serving the purpose of *knaves*.



## CHAP. VI.

*Arrive at Fursbout—Adventure of Friar Christopher—Visit Thebes—  
Luxor and Carnac—Large Ruins at Edfu and Esné Proceed on our  
Voyage.*

WE arrived happily at Fursbout that same forenoon, and went to the convent of Italian Friars, who, like those of Achmim, are of the order of the reformed Franciscans, of whose mission I shall speak at large in the sequel.

WE were received more kindly here than at Achmim ; but Padre Antonio, superior of that last convent, upon which this of Fursbout also depends, following us, our good reception suffered a small abatement. In short, the good Friars would not let us *buy* meat, because they said it would be a *shame* and *reproach* to them ; and they would not *give* us any, for fear that should be a reproach to them likewise, if it was told in Europe they *lived well*.

AFTER some time I took the liberty of providing for myself, to which they submitted with christian patience. Yet these convents were founded expressly with a view, and from a necessity of providing for travellers between Egypt and Ethiopia, and we were strictly intitled to that entertainment,



tainment. Indeed there is very little use for this institution in Upper Egypt, as long as rich Arabs are there, much more charitable and humane to stranger Christians than the Monks.

FURSHOUT is in a large and cultivated plain. It is nine miles over to the foot of the mountains, all sown with wheat. There are, likewise, plantations of sugar canes. The town, as they said, contains above 10,000 people, but I have no doubt this computation is rather exaggerated.

WE waited upon the Shekh Hamam ; who was a big, tall, handsome man ; I apprehend not far from sixty. He was dressed in a large fox-skin pelisse over the rest of his cloaths, and had a yellow India shawl wrapt about his head, like a turban. He received me with great politeness and condescension, made me sit down by him, and asked me more about Cairo than about Europe.

THE Rais had told him our adventure with the faint, at which he laughed very heartily, saying, I was a wise man, and a man of conduct. To me he only said, " they are bad people at Dendera ;" to which I answered, " there were very few places in the world in which there were not some bad." He replied, " Your observation is true, but there they are all bad ; rest yourselves however here, it is a quiet place ; though there are still some even in this place not quite so good as they *ought* to be."

THE Shekh was a man of immense riches, and, little by little, had united in his own person, all the separate districts

of Upper Egypt, each of which formerly had its particular prince. But his interest was great at Constantinople, where he applied directly for what he wanted, insomuch as to give a jealousy to the Beys of Cairo. He had in farm from the Grand Signior almost the whole country, between Siout and Syene, or Affouan. I believe this is the Shekh of Upper Egypt, whom Mr Irvine speaks of so gratefully. He was betrayed, and murdered some time after, by one of the Beys whom he had protected in his own country.

WHILE we were at Furskout, there happened a very extraordinary phenomenon. It rained the whole night, and till about nine o'clock next morning; and the people began to be very apprehensive lest the whole town should be destroyed. It is a perfect prodigy to see rain here; and the prophets said it portended a dissolution of government, which was justly verified soon afterwards, and at that time indeed was extremely probable.

FURSKOUT is in lat  $26^{\circ} 3' 30''$ ; above that, to the southward, on the same plain, is another large village, belonging to Shekh Ismael, a nephew of Shekh Hamam. It is a large town, built with clay like Furskout, and surrounded with groves of palm trees, and very large plantations of sugar-canes. Here they make sugar.

SHEKH ISMAEL was a very pleasant and agreeable man, but in bad health, having a violent asthma, and sometimes pleuretic complaints, to be removed by bleeding only. He had given these friars a house for a convent in Badjoura; but as they had not yet taken possession of it, he desired me to come and stay there.

FRIAR CHRISTOPHER, whom I understood to have been a Milanese barber, was his physician, but he had not the science of an English barber in surgery. He could not bleed, but with a sort of instrument resembling that which is used in cupping, only that it had but a single lancet; with this he had been lucky enough as yet to escape laming his patients. This bleeding instrument they call the Tabange, or the Pistol, as they do the cupping instrument likewise. I never could help shuddering at seeing the confidence with which this man placed a small brass box upon all sorts of arms, and drew the trigger for the point to go where fortune pleased.

SHEKH ISMAEL was very fond of this surgeon, and the surgeon of his patron; all would have gone well, had not friar Christopher aimed likewise at being an Astronomer. Above all he gloried in being a violent enemy to the Copernican system, which unluckily he had mistaken for a heresy in the church; and partly from his own slight ideas and stock of knowledge, partly from some Milanese almanacs he had got, he attempted, the weather being cloudy, to foretell the time when the moon was to change, it being that of the month Ramadan, when the Mahometans' lent, or fasting, was to begin.

It happened that the Badjoura people, and their Shekh Ismael, were upon indifferent terms with Hamam, and his men of Fushout, and being desirous to get a triumph over their neighbours by the help of their friar Christopher, they continued to eat, drink, and smoke, two days after the conjunction.

THE moon had been seen the second night, by a Fakir\*, in the desert, who had sent word to Shekh Hamam, and he had begun his fast. But Ismael, assured by friar Christopher that it was impossible, had continued eating.

THE people of Furfhout, meeting their neighbours singing and dancing, and with pipes of tobacco in their mouths, *all cried out* with astonishment, and asked, "Whether they had abjured their religion or not?"—From words they came to blows; seven or eight were wounded on each side, luckily none of them mortally.—Hamam next day came to inquire at his nephew Shekh Ismael, what had been the occasion of all this, and to consult what was to be done, for the two villages had declared one another infidels.

I WAS then with my servants in Badjoura, in great quiet and tranquillity, under the protection, and very much in the confidence of Ismael; but hearing the hooping, and noise in the streets, I had barricaded my outer-doors. A high wall surrounded the house and court-yard, and there I kept quiet, satisfied with being in perfect safety.

IN the interim, I heard it was a quarrel about the keeping of Ramadan, and, as I had provisions, water, and employment enough in the house, I resolved to stay at home till they fought it out; being very little interested which of them should be victorious.—About noon, I was sent for to Ismael's house, and found his uncle Hamam with him.

HE

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\* A poor faint.

HE told me, there were several wounded in a quarrel about the Ramadan, and recommended them to my care. "About Ramadan, said I! what, your principal fast! have you not settled that yet?"—Without answering me as to this, he asked, "When does the moon change?" As I knew nothing of friar Christopher's operations, I answered, in hours, minutes, and seconds, as I found them in the ephemerides.

"Look you there, says Hamam, this is fine work!" and, directing his discourse to me, "When shall we see it?" Sir, said I, that is impossible for me to tell, as it depends on the state of the heavens; but, if the sky is clear, you must see her to-night; if you had looked for her, probably you would have seen her last night low in the horizon, thin like a thread; she is now three days old.—He started at this, then told me friar Christopher's operation, and the consequences of it.

ISMAEL was ashamed, cursed him, and threatened revenge. It was too late to retract, the moon appeared, and spoke for herself; and the unfortunate friar was disgraced, and banished from Badjoura. Luckily the pleuretic fitch came again, and I was called to bleed him, which I did with a lancet; but he was so terrified at its brightness, at the ceremony of the towel and the bason, and at my preparation, that it did not please him, and therefore he was obliged to be reconciled to Christopher and his tabange.—Badjoura is in lat.  $26^{\circ} 3' 16''$ ; and is situated on the western shore of the Nile, as Furihout is likewise.



WE left Furfhout the 7th of January 1769, early in the morning. We had not hired our boat farther than Furfhout; but the good terms which subsisted between me and the faint, my Rais, made an accommodation very easy to carry us farther. He now agreed for L. 4 to carry us to Syene and down again; but, if he behaved well, he expected a trifling premium. "And, if you behave ill, Hassan," said I, what do you think you deserve?"—"To be hanged," said he, I deserve, and desire no better."

OUR wind at first was but scant. The Rais said, that he thought his boat did not go as it used to do, and that it was growing into a tree. The wind, however, freshened up towards noon, and eased him of his fears. We passed a large town called How, on the west side of the Nile. About four o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at El Gourni, a small village, a quarter of a mile distant from the Nile. It has in it a temple of old Egyptian architecture. I think that this, and the two adjoining heaps of ruins, which are at the same distance from the Nile, probably might have been part of the ancient Thebes.

SHAAMY and Taamy are two colossal statues in a sitting posture covered with hieroglyphics. The southmost is of one stone, and perfectly entire. The northmost is a good deal more mutilated. It was probably broken by Cambyfes; and they have since endeavoured to repair it. The other has a very remarkable head-dress, which can be compared to nothing but a tye-wig, such as worn in the present day. These two, situated in a very fertile spot belonging to Thebes, were apparently the Nilometers of that town, as the marks which the water has left upon the bases sufficiently

shew. The bases of both of them are bare, and uncovered, to the bottom of the plinth, or lowest member of their pedestal; so that there is not the eighth of an inch of the lowest part of them covered with mud, though they stand in the middle of a plain, and have stood there certainly above 3000 years; since which time, if the fanciful rise of the land of Egypt by the Nile had been true, the earth should have been raised so as fully to conceal half of them both.

THESE statues are covered with inscriptions of Greek and Latin; the import of which seems to be, that there were certain travellers, or particular people, who heard Memnon's statue utter the sound it was said to do, upon being struck with the rays of the sun.

It may be very reasonably expected, that I should here say something of the building and fall of the first Thebes; but as this would carry me to very early ages, and interrupt for a long time my voyage upon the Nile; as this is, besides, connected with the history of several nations which I am about to describe, and more proper for the work of an historian, than the cursory descriptions of a traveller, I shall defer saying any thing upon the subject, till I come to treat of it in the first of these characters, and more especially till I shall speak of the origin of the *shepherds*, and the calamities brought upon Egypt by that powerful nation, a people often mentioned by different writers, but whose history hitherto has been but imperfectly known.

NOTHING remains of the ancient Thebes but four prodigious temples, all of them in appearance more ancient, but neither so entire, nor so magnificent, as those of Dendera.

The temples at Medinet Tabu are the most elegant of these. The hieroglyphics are cut to the depth of half-a-foot, in some places, but we have still the same figures, or rather a less variety, than at Dendera.

THE hieroglyphics are of four sorts; first, such as have only the contour marked, and, as it were, scratched only in the stone. The second are hollowed; and in the middle of that space rises the figure in relief, so that the prominent part of the figure is equal to the flat, unwrought surface of the stone, and seems to have a frame round it, designed to defend the hieroglyphic from mutilation. The third sort is in relief, or basso relievo, as it is called, where the figure is left bare and exposed, without being sunk in, or defended, by any compartment cut round it in the stone. The fourth are those mentioned in the beginning of this description, the outlines of the figure being cut very deep in the stone.

ALL the hieroglyphics, but the last mentioned, which do not admit it, are painted red, blue, and green, as at Dendera, and with no other colours.

NOTWITHSTANDING all this variety in the manner of executing the hieroglyphical figures, and the prodigious multitude which I have seen in the several buildings, I never could make the number of different hieroglyphics amount to more than five hundred and fourteen, and of these there were certainly many, which were not really different, but from the ill execution of the sculpture only appeared so. From this, I conclude, certainly, that it can be no entire language which hieroglyphics are meant to contain, for no  
language

language could be comprehended in five hundred words, and it is probable that these hieroglyphics are not *alphabetical*, or *single letters* only; for five hundred letters would make *too large* an alphabet. The Chinese indeed have many more letters in use, but have no alphabet, but *who is it that understands the Chinese?*

THERE are three different characters which, I observe, have been in use at the same time in Egypt, Hieroglyphics, the Mummy character, and the Ethiopic. These are all three found, as I have seen, on the same mummy, and therefore were certainly used at the same time. The last only I believe was a *language*.

THE mountains immediately above or behind Thebes, are hollowed out into numberless caverns, the first habitations of the Ethiopian colony which built the city. I imagine they continued long in these habitations, for I do not think the temples were ever intended but for *public* and *solemn* uses, and in none of these ancient cities did I ever see a wall or foundation, or any thing like a private house; all are temples and tombs, if temples and tombs in those times were not the same thing. But vestiges of houses there are none, whatever \* Diodorus Siculus may say, building with stone was too expensive for individuals; the houses probably were all of clay, thatched with palm branches, as they are at this day. This is one reason why so few ruins of the immense number of cities we hear of remain.

Q<sup>2</sup>

THEBES,

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\* Diod. Sic. lib. 1.

THEBES, according to Homer, had a *hundred gates*. We cannot, however, discover yet the foundation of any wall that it had; and as for the horsemen and chariots it is said to have sent out, all the Thebaid sown with wheat would not have maintained *one-half* of them.

THEBES, at least the ruins of the temples, called Medinet Tabu, are built in a long stretch of about a mile broad, most parsimoniously chosen at the sandy foot of the mountains. The Horti\* Penfiles, or hanging gardens, were surely formed upon the sides of these hills, then supplied with water by mechanical devices. The utmost is done to spare the plain, and with great reason; for all the space of ground this ancient city has had to maintain its myriads of horses and men, is a plain of three quarters of a mile broad, between the town and the river, upon which plain the water rises to the height of four, and five feet, as we may judge by the marks on the statues Shaamy and Taamy. All this pretended populousness of ancient Thebes I therefore believe fabulous.

It is a circumstance very remarkable, in building the first temples, that, where the side-walls are solid, that is, not supported by pillars, some of these have their angles and faces perpendicular, others inclined in a very considerable angle to the horizon. Those temples, whose walls are inclined, you may judge by the many hieroglyphics and ornaments, are of the first ages, or the greatest antiquity. From which, I am disposed to think, that singular construction was a remnant

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\* Plin. lib. 26. cap. 14.



nant of the partiality of the builders for their first domiciles; an imitation of the slope\*, or inclination of the sides of mountains, and that this inclination of flat surfaces to each other in building, gave afterwards the first idea of Pyramids †.

A NUMBER of robbers, who much resemble our gypsies, live in the holes of the mountains above Thebes. They are all out-laws, punished with death if elsewhere found. Osman Bey, an ancient governor of Girgé, unable to suffer any longer the disorders committed by these people, ordered a quantity of dried faggots to be brought together, and, with his soldiers, took possession of the face of the mountain, where the greatest number of these wretches were: He then ordered all their caves to be filled with this dry brushwood, to which he set fire, so that most of them were destroyed; but they have since recruited their numbers, without changing their manners..

ABOUT half a mile north of El Gourmi, are the magnificent, stupendous sepulchres, of Thebes. The mountains of the Thebaid come close behind the town; they are not run in upon one another like ridges, but stand insulated upon their bases; so that you can get round each of them. A hundred of these, it is said, are excavated into sepulchral, and a variety of other apartments. I went through seven of them with a great deal of fatigue. It is a solitary place; and

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\* See Norden's views of the Temples at Efné and Edfu. Vol. ii. plate 6. p. 80.

† This inclined figure of the sides, is frequently found in the small boxes within the mummy-chests.

and my guides, either from a natural impatience and distaste that these people have at such employments, or, that their fears of the banditti that live in the caverns of the mountains were real, importuned me to return to the boat, even before I had begun my search, or got into the mountains where are the many large apartments of which I was in quest.

IN the first one of these I entered is the prodigious sarcophagus, some say of Menes, others of Ofimandyas; possibly of neither. It is sixteen feet high, ten long, and six broad, of one piece of red-granite; and, as such, is, I suppose, the finest vase in the world. Its cover is still upon it, (broken on one side,) and it has a figure in relief on the outside. It is not probably the tomb of Ofimandyas, because, Diodorus \* says, that it was ten stadia from the tomb of the kings; whereas this is one among them.

THERE have been some ornaments at the outer-pillars, or outer-entry, which have been broken and thrown down. Thence you descend through an inclined passage, I suppose, about twenty feet broad; I speak only by guess, for I did not measure. The side-walls, as well as the roof of this passage, are covered with a coat of stucco, of a finer and more equal grain, or surface, than any I ever saw in Europe. I found my black-lead pencil little more worn by it than by writing upon paper.

UPON

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\* Diod. Sic. lib. 1.

UPON the left-hand side is the crocodile seizing upon the *apis*, and plunging him into the water. On the right-hand is the \* *scarabæus thebaicus*, or the thebaic beetle, the first animal that is seen alive after the Nile retires from the land; and therefore thought to be an emblem of the resurrection. My own conjecture is, that the *apis* was the emblem of the arable land of Egypt; the crocodile, the typhon, or *cacodæmon*, the type of an over-abundant Nile; that the *scarabæus* was the land which had been overflowed, and from which the water had soon retired, and has nothing to do with the resurrection or immortality, neither of which at that time were in contemplation.

FARTHER forward on the right-hand of the entry, the pannels, or compartments, were still formed in stucco, but, in place of figures in relief, they were painted in fresco. I dare say this was the case on the left-hand of the passage, as well as the right. But the first discovery was so unexpected, and I had flattered myself that I should be so far master of my own time, as to see the whole at my leisure, that I was rivetted, as it were, to the spot by the first sight of these paintings, and I could proceed no further.

IN one pannel were several musical instruments strowed upon the ground, chiefly of the hautboy kind, with a mouth-piece of reed. There were also some simple pipes or flutes. With them were several jars apparently of potter-ware, which, having their mouths covered with parchment or skin,

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\* See the figure of this insect in Paul Lucas.

skin, and being braced on their sides like a drum, were probably the instrument called the *tabor*, or \**tabret*, beat upon by the hands, coupled in earliest ages with the harp, and preserved still in Abyssinia, though its companion, the last-mentioned instrument, is no longer known *there*.

IN three following pannels were painted, in fresco, three harps, which merited the utmost attention, whether we consider the elegance of these instruments in their form, and the detail of their parts as they are here clearly expressed, or confine ourselves to the reflection that necessarily follows, to how great perfection music must have arrived, before an artist could have produced so complete an instrument as either of these.

As the first harp seemed to be the most perfect, and least spoiled, I immediately attached myself to this, and desired my clerk to take upon him the charge of the second. In this way, by sketching exactly, and loosely, I hoped to have made myself master of all the paintings in that cave, perhaps to have extended my researches to others, though, in the sequel, I found myself miserably deceived.

My first drawing was that of a man playing upon a harp; he was standing, and the instrument being broad, and flat at the base, probably for that purpose, supported itself easily with a very little inclination upon his arm; his head is close shaved, his eye-brows black, without beard or mustaches.

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\* Gen. xxxi. 27. Isa. chap. xxx. ver. 32.





*Kent sculp.*

*Painting in Fresco, in the Sepulchres of Thebes.*



tachoes. He has on him a loose shirt, like what they wear at this day in Nubia (only it is not blue) with loose sleeves, and arms and neck bare. It seemed to be thick muslin, or cotton cloth, and long-ways through it is a crimson stripe about one-eighth of an inch broad; a proof, if this is Egyptian manufacture, that they understood at that time how to dye cotton, crimson, an art found out in Britain only a very few years ago. If this is the fabric of India, still it proves the antiquity of the commerce between the two countries, and the introduction of Indian manufactures into Egypt.

It reached down to his ankle; his feet are without sandals; he seems to be a corpulent man, of about sixty years of age, and of a complexion rather dark for an Egyptian. To guess by the detail of the figure, the painter seems to have had the same degree of merit with a good sign-painter in Europe, at this day.—If we allow this harper's stature to be five feet ten inches, then we may compute the harp, in its extreme length, to be something less than six feet and a half.

THIS instrument is of a much more advantageous form than the triangular Grecian harp. It has thirteen strings, but wants the forepiece of the frame opposite to the longest string. The back part is the sounding-board, composed of four thin pieces of wood, joined together in form of a cone, that is, growing wider towards the bottom; so that, as the length of the string increases, the square of the corresponding space in the sounding-board, in which the sound was to undulate, always increases in proportion. The whole principles, on which this harp is constructed, are rational and

VOL. I. R ingenious,

ingenious, and the ornamented parts are executed in the very best manner.

THE bottom and sides of the frame seem to be fincered, and inlaid, probably with ivory, tortoise-shell, and mother-of-pearl, the ordinary produce of the neighbouring seas and deserts. It would be even now impossible, either to construct or to finish a harp of any form with more taste and elegance. Besides the proportions of its outward form, we must observe likewise how near it approached to a perfect instrument, for it wanted only two strings of having two complete octaves; that these were purposely omitted, not from defect of taste or science, must appear beyond contradiction, when we consider the harp that follows.

I HAD no sooner finished the harp which I had taken in hand, than I went to my assistant, to see what progress he had made in the drawing in which he was engaged. I found, to my very great surprise, that this harp differed essentially, in form and distribution of its parts, from the one I had drawn, without having lost any of its elegance; on the contrary, that it was finished with full more attention than the other. It seemed to be fincered with the same materials, ivory and tortoise-shell, but the strings were differently disposed, the ends of the three longest, where they joined to the sounding-board below, were defaced by a hole dug in the wall. Several of the strings in different parts had been scraped as with a knife, for the rest, it was very perfect. It had eighteen strings. A man, who seemed to be still older than the former, but in habit perfectly the same, bare-footed, close shaved, and of the same complexion with him, stood playing



*Painting in Fresco, in the Sepulchres of Thebes.*



playing with both his hands near the middle of the harp, in a manner seemingly less agitated than in the other.

I WENT back to my first harp, verified, and examined my drawing in all its parts ; it is with great pleasure I now give a figure of this second harp to the reader, it was mislaid among a multitude of other papers, at the time when I was solicited to communicate the former drawing to a gentleman then writing the History of Music, which he has already submitted to the public ; it is very lately and unexpectedly this last harp has been found ; I am only sorry this accident has deprived the public of Dr Burney's remarks upon it. I hope he will yet favour us with them, and therefore abstain from anticipating his reflections, as I consider this as his province ; I never knew any one so capable of affording the public, new, and at the same time just lights on this subject.

THERE still remained a third harp of ten strings, its precise form I do not well remember, for I had seen it but once when I first entered the cave, and was now preparing to copy that likewise. I do not recollect that there was any man playing upon this one, I think it was rather resting upon a wall, with some kind of drapery upon one end of it, and was the smallest of the three. But I am not at all so certain of particulars concerning this, as to venture any description of it ; what I have said of the other two may be absolutely depended upon.

I LOOK upon these harps then as the Theban harps in use in the time of Sesostris, who did not rebuild, but decorate ancient Thebes ; I consider them as affording an in-

contestible proof, were they the only monuments remaining, that every art necessary to the construction, ornament, and use of this instrument, was in the highest perfection, and if so, all the others must have probably attained to the same degree.

WE see in particular the ancients then possessed an art relative to architecture, that of hewing the hardest stones with the greatest ease, of which we are at this day utterly ignorant and incapable. We have no instrument that could do it, no composition that could make tools of temper sufficient to cut bass reliefs in granite or porphyry so readily; and our ignorance in this is the more completely shewn, in that we have all the reasons to believe, the cutting instrument with which they did these surprising feats was composed of brass; a metal of which, after a thousand experiments, no tool has ever been made that could serve the purpose of a common knife, though we are at the same time certain, it was of brass the ancients made their razors.

THESE harps, in my opinion, overturn all the accounts hitherto given of the earliest state of music and musical instruments in the east; and are altogether in their form, ornaments, and compass, an incontestible proof, stronger than a thousand Greek quotations, that geometry, drawing, mechanics, and music, were at the greatest perfection when this instrument was made, and that the period from which we date the invention of these arts, was only the beginning of the æra of their restoration. This was the sentiment of Solomon, a writer who lived at the time when this harp was painted.

“Is there (says Solomon) any thing whereof it may be said,  
“ See,



"See, this is new! it hath been already of old time which was before us\*."

WE find, in these very countries, how a later calamity, of the same public nature, the conquest of the Saracens, occasioned a similar downfall of literature, by the burning the Alexandrian library under the fanatical caliph Omar. We see how soon after, they flourished, planted by the same hands that before had rooted them out.

THE effects of a revolution occasioned, at the period I am now speaking of, by the universal inundation of the *Shepherds*, were the destruction of Thebes, the ruin of architecture, and the downfall of astronomy in Egypt. Still a remnant was left in the colonies and correspondents of Thebes, though fallen. Ezekiel† celebrates Tyre as being, from her beginning, famous for the tabret and harp, and it is probably to Tyre the taste for music fled from the contempt and persecution of the barbarous Shepherds; who, though a numerous nation, to this day never have yet possessed any species of music, or any kind of musical instruments capable of improvement.

ALTHOUGH it is a curious subject for reflection, it should not surprise us to find here the harp, in such variety of form. Old Thebes, as we presently shall see, had been destroyed, and was soon after decorated and adorned, but not rebuilt by Sesostris. It was some time between the reign of Menes, the first king of the Thebaid, and the first general war of the

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\* Eccles. chap. i. ver. 10. † Ezek. chap. xxviii. ver. 13.

the Shepherds, that these decorations and paintings were made. This gives it a prodigious antiquity; but supposing it was a favourite instrument, consequently well understood at the building of Tyre \* in the year 1320 before Christ, and Sesostris had lived in the time of Solomon, as Sir Isaac Newton imagines; still there were 320 years since that instrument had already attained to great perfection, a sufficient time to have varied it into every form.

UPON seeing the preparations I was making to proceed farther in my researches, my conductors lost all sort of subordination. They were afraid my intention was to sit in this cave all night, (as it really was,) and to visit the others next morning. With great clamour and marks of discontent, they dashed their torches against the largest harp, and made the best of their way out of the cave, leaving me and my people in the dark; and all the way as they went, they made dreadful denunciations of tragical events that were immediately to follow, upon their departure from the cave.

THERE was no possibility of doing more. I offered them money, much beyond the utmost of their expectations; but the fear of the Troglodytes, above Medinet Tabu, had fallen upon them; and seeing at last this was real, I was not myself without apprehensions, for they were banditti, and outlaws, and no reparation was to be expected, whatever they should do to hurt us.

VERY

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\* Nay, prior to this, the harp is mentioned as a common instrument in Abraham's time 1370 years before Christ, Gen. chap. xxxii. ver. 27.

VERY much vexed, I mounted my horse to return to the boat. The road lay through a very narrow valley, the sides of which were covered with bare loose stones. I had no sooner got down to the bottom, than I heard a great deal of loud speaking on both sides of the valley; and, in an instant, a number of large stones were rolled down upon me, which, though I heard in motion, I could not see, on account of the darkness; this increased my terror.

FINDING, by the impatience of the horse, that several of these stones had come near him, and that it probably was the noise of his feet which guided those that threw them, I dismounted, and ordered the Moor to get on horseback; which he did, and in a moment galloped out of danger. This, if I had been wise, I certainly might have done before him, but my mind was occupied by the paintings. Nevertheless, I was resolved upon revenge before leaving these banditti, and listened till I heard voices, on the right side of the hill. I accordingly levelled my gun as near as possible, by the ear, and fired one barrel among them. A moment's silence ensued, and then a loud howl, which seemed to have come from thirty or forty persons. I took my servant's blunderbuss, and discharged it where I heard the howl, and a violent confusion of tongues followed, but no more stones. As I found this was the time to escape, I kept along the dark side of the hill, as expeditiously as possible, till I came to the mouth of the plain, when we reloaded our firelocks, expecting some interruption before we reached the boat; and then we made the best of our way to the river.



WE found our Rais full of fears for us. He had been told, that, as soon as day light should appear, the whole Troglodytes were to come down to the river, in order to plunder and destroy our boat.

THIS night expedition at the mountains was but partial, the general attack was reserved for next day. Upon holding council, we were unanimous in opinion, as indeed we had been during the whole course of this voyage. We thought, since our enemy had left us to-night, it would be our fault if they found us in the morning. Therefore, without noise, we cast off our rope that fastened us, and let ourselves over to the other side. About twelve at night a gentle breeze began to blow, which wafted us up to Luxor, where there was a governor, for whom I had letters.

FROM being convinced by the sight of Thebes, which had not the appearance of ever having had walls, that the fable of the hundred gates, mentioned by Homer, was mere invention, I was led to conjecture what could be the origin of that fable.

THAT the old inhabitants of Thebes lived in caves in the mountains, is, I think, without doubt, and that the hundred mountains I have spoken of, excavated, and adorned, were the greatest wonders at that time, seems equally probable. Now, the name of these to this day is Beeban el Meluke, the ports or gates of the kings, and hence, perhaps, come the hundred gates of Thebes upon which the Greeks have dwelt so much. Homer never saw Thebes, it was demolished before the days of any profane writer, either in prose or verse. What he added to its history must have been from imagination.

ALL that is said of Thebes, by poets or historians, after the days of Homer, is meant of Diospolis; which was built by the Greeks long after Thebes was destroyed, as its name testifies; though Diodorus \* says it was built by Bufiris. It was on the east side of the Nile, whereas ancient Thebes was on the west, though both are considered as one city; and † Strabo says, that the river ‡ runs through the middle of Thebes, by which he means between old Thebes and Diospolis, or Luxor and Medinet Tabu.

WHILE in the boat, I could not help regretting the time I had spent in the morning, in looking for the place in the narrow valley where the mark of the famous golden circle was visible, which Norden says he saw, but I could discern no traces of it any where, and indeed it does not follow that the mark left was that of a circle. This magnificent instrument was probably fixed perpendicular to the horizon in the plane of the meridian; so that the appearance of the place where it stood, would very probably not partake of the circular form at all, or any precise shape whereby to know it. Besides, as I have before said, it was not among these tombs or excavated mountains, but ten fathoms from them, so the vestiges of this famous instrument § could not be found here. Indeed, being omitted in the latest edition of Norden, it would seem that traveller himself was not perfectly well assured of its existence.

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\* Diod. Sic. Bib. lib. i. p. 42. § d. † Strabo, lib. 17. p. 943. ‡ Nah. ch. 3. ver. 8, & 9.

§ A similar instrument, erected by Eratosthenes at Alexandria, cut of copper, was used by Hipparchus and Ptolemy.—Alm. lib. 1. cap. 11. 3. cap. 2. Vide his remarks on Mr Greave's Pyramidographia, p. 134.



WE were well received by the governor of Luxor, who was also a believer in judicial astrology. Having made him a small present, he furnished us with provisions, and, among several other articles, some brown sugar; and as we had seen limes and lemons in great perfection at Thebes, we were resolved to refresh ourselves with some punch, in remembrance of Old England. But, after what had happened the night before, none of our people chose to run the risk of meeting the Troglodytes. We therefore procured a servant of the governor's of the town, to mount upon his goat-skin filled with wind, and float down the stream from Luxor to El Gournie, to bring us a supply of these, which he soon after did.

HE informed us, that the people in the caves had, early in the morning, made a descent upon the townsmen, with a view to plunder our boat; that several of them had been wounded the night before, and they threatened to pursue us to Syene. The servant did all he could to frighten them, by saying that his master's intention was to pass over with troops, and exterminate them, as Osman Bey of Girgé had before done, and *we* were to assist him with our fire-arms.— After this we heard no more of them.

LUXOR, and Carnac, which is a mile and a quarter below it, are by far the largest and most magnificent scenes of ruins in Egypt, much more extensive and stupendous than those of Thebes and Dendera put together.

THERE are two obelisks here of great beauty, and in good preservation, they are less than those at Rome, but not at all mutilated. The pavement, which is made to receive the  
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the shadow, is to this day so horizontal, that it might still be used in observation. The top of the obelisk is semicircular, an experiment, I suppose, made at the instance of the observer, by varying the shape of the point of the obelisk, to get rid of the penumbra.

At Carnac we saw the remains of two vast rows of sphinxes, one on the right-hand, the other on the left, (their heads were mostly broken) and, a little lower, a number of termini as it should seem. They were composed of basalt, with a dog or lion's head, of Egyptian sculpture. They stood in lines likewise, as if to conduct or serve as an avenue to some principal building.

They had been covered with earth, till very lately a \*Venetian physician and antiquary bought one of them at a very considerable price, as he said, for the king of Sardinia. This has caused several others to be uncovered, though no purchaser hath yet offered.

UPON the outside of the walls at Carnac and Luxor there seems to be an historical engraving instead of hieroglyphics; this we had not met with before. It is a representation of men, horses, chariots, and battles; some of the attitudes are freely and well drawn, they are rudely scratched upon the surface of the stone, as some of the hieroglyphics at Thebes are. The weapons the men make use of are short javelins, such as are common at this day among the inhabitants of

Egypt, only they have feathered wings like arrows. There is also distinguished among the rest, the figure of a man on horseback, with a lion fighting furiously by him, and Diodorus \* says, Osimandyas was so represented at Thebes. This whole composition merits great attention.

I HAVE said, that Luxor is Diofpolis, and should think, that that place, and Carnac together, made the Jovis Civitas Magna of Ptolemy, though there is 9' difference of the latitude by my observation compared with his. But as mine was made on the south of Luxor, if his was made on the north of Carnac, the difference will be greatly diminished.

THE 17th we took leave of our friendly Shekh of Luxor; and sailed with a very fair wind, and in great spirits. The liberality of the Shekh of Luxor had extended as far as even to my Rais, whom he engaged to land me here upon my return.—I had procured him considerable ease in some complaints he had; and he saw our departure with as much regret as in other places they commonly did our arrival.

On the eastern shore are Hambdé, Maschergarona, Tot, Senimi, and Gibeg. Mr Norden seems to have very much confused the places in this neighbourhood, as he puts Erment opposite to Carnac, and Thebes farther south than Erment, and on the east side of the Nile, whilst he places Luxor farther south than Erment. But Erment is fourteen miles farther south than Thebes, and Luxor about a quarter

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\*Diod. Sic. Bib. lib. I. p. 45. § c.

ter of a mile (as I have already said) farther south on the East side of the river, whereas Thebes is on the West.

He has fixed a village (which he calls \*Demegeit) in the situation where Thebes stands, and he calls it Crocodilopolis, from what authority I know not; but the whole geography is here exceedingly confused, and out of its proper position.

IN the evening we came to an anchor on the eastern shore nearly opposite to Efné. Some of our people had landed to shoot, trusting to a turn of the river that is here, which would enable them to keep up with us; but they did not arrive till the fun was setting, loaded with hares, pigeons, gootos, all very bad game. I had, on my part, staid on board, and had shot two geese, as bad eating as the others, but very beautiful in their plumage.

WE passed over to Efné next morning. It is the ancient Latopolis, and has very great remains, particularly a large temple, which, though the whole of it is of the remotest antiquity, seems to have been built at different times, or rather out of the ruins of different ancient buildings. The hieroglyphics upon this are very ill executed, and are not painted. The town is the residence of an Arab Shekh, and the inhabitants are a very greedy, bad sort of people; but as I was dressed like an Arab, they did not molest, because they did not know me.

THE 18th, we left Efné, and passed the town of Edfu, where there is likewise considerable remains of Egyptian architecture. It is the Appollinis Civitas Magna.

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\* Vide Norden's map of the Nile.

THE wind failing, we were obliged to stop in a very poor, desolate, and dangerous part of the Nile, called Jibbel el Silfelly, where a boom, or chain, was drawn across the river, to hinder, as is supposed, the Nubian boats from committing piratical practices in Egypt lower down the stream. The stones on both sides, to which the chain was fixed, are very visible; but I imagine that it was for fiscal rather than for warlike purposes, for Syene being garrisoned, there is no possibility of boats passing from Nubia by that city into Egypt. There is indeed another purpose to which it might be designed; to prevent war upon the Nile between any two states.

WE know from Juvenal\*, who lived some time at Syene, that there was a tribe in that neighbourhood called Ombi, who had violent contentions with the people of Dendera about the crocodile; it is remarkable these two parties were Anthropophagi so late as Juvenal's time, yet no historian speaks of this extraordinary fact, which cannot be called in question, as he was an eye-witness and resided at Syene.

Now these two nations who were at war had above a hundred miles of neutral territory between them, and therefore they could never meet except on the Nile. But either one or the other possessing this chain, could hinder his adversary from coming nearer him. As the chain is in the hermonthic nome, as well as the capital of the Ombi, I suppose this chain to be the barrier of this  
last

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\* Juven. Sat. 15. ver. 76.



last state, to hinder those of Dendera from coming up the river *to eat them*.

ABOUT noon we passed Coom Ombo, a round building like a castle, where is supposed to have been the metropolis of Ombi, the people last spoken of. We then arrived at Daroo\*, a miserable mansion, unconscious that, some years after, we were to be indebted to that paltry village for the man who was to guide us through the desert, and restore us to our native country and our friends.

WE next came to Shekh Ammer, the encampment of the Arabs † Ababdé, I suppose the same that Mr Norden calls Ababuda, who reach from near Coffeir far into the desert. As I had been acquainted with one of them at Badjoura, who desired medicines for his father, I promised to call upon him, and see their effect, when I should pass Shekh Ammer, which I now accordingly did; and by the reception I met with, I found they did not expect I would ever have been as good as my word. Indeed they would probably have been in the right, but as I was about to engage myself in extensive deserts, and this was a very considerable nation in these tracts, I thought it was worth my while to put myself under their protection.

SHEKH AMMER is not one, but a collection of villages, composed of miserable huts, containing, at this time, about a thousand effective men: they possess few horse, and are  
mostly

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\* Idris Welled Hamran, our guide through the great desert, dwelt in this village.

† The ancient Adei.

mostly mounted on camels. These were friends to Shekh Hamam, governor of Upper Egypt for the time, and consequently to the Turkish government at Syene, as also to the janissaries there at Deir and Ibrim. They were the barrier, or bulwark, against the prodigious number of Arabs, the Bithareen, and others, depending upon the kingdom of Sennaar.

IBRAHIM, the son, who had seen me at Fushout and Badjoura, knew me as soon as I arrived, and, after acquainting his father, came with about a dozen of naked attendants, with lances in their hands to escort me. I was scarce got into the door of the tent, before a great dinner was brought after their custom; and, that being dispatched, it was a thousand times repeated, how little they expected that I would have thought or inquired about them.

WE were introduced to their Shekh, who was sick, in a corner of a hut, where he lay upon a carpet, with a cushion under his head. This chief of the Ababdé, called Nimmer, *i. e. the Tiger* (though his furious qualities were at this time in great measure allayed by sickness) asked me much about the state of Lower Egypt. I satisfied him as far as possible, but recommended to him to confine his thoughts nearer home, and not to be over anxious about these distant countries, as he himself seemed, at that time, to be in a declining state of health.

NIMMER was a man about sixty years of age, exceedingly tormented with the gravel, which was more extraordinary as he dwelt near the Nile; for it is, universally, the disease with

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\* The Bithareen are the Arabs who live in the frontier between the two nations. They are the nominal subjects of Sennaar, but, in fact, indiscreet banditti, at least as to strangers.

with those who use water from draw-wells, as in the desert. But he told me, that, for the first twenty-seven years of his life, he never had seen the Nile, unless upon some plundering party; that he had been constantly at war with the people of the cultivated part of Egypt, and reduced them often to the state of starving; but now that he was old, a friend to Shekh Hamam, and was resident near the Nile, he drank of its water, and was little better, for he was already a martyr to the disease. I had sent him soap pills from Badjoura, which had done him a great deal of good, and now gave him lime-water, and promised him, on my return, to shew his people how to make it.

A VERY friendly conversation ensued, in which was repeated often, how little they expected I would have visited them! As this implied two things; the first, that I paid no regard to my promise when given; the other, that I did not esteem them of consequence enough to give myself the trouble, I thought it right to clear myself from these suspicions.

“SHEKH NIMMER, said I, this frequent repetition that you  
 “thought I would not keep my word is *grievous* to me. I am  
 “a Christian, and have lived now many years among you  
 “Arabs. Why did you imagine that I would not keep my  
 “word, since it is a principle among all the Arabs I have  
 “lived with, inviolably to keep theirs? When your son Ibra-  
 “him came to me at Badjoura, and told me the pain that  
 “you was in, night and day, fear of God, and desire to do  
 “good, even to them I had never seen, made me give you  
 “those medicines that have eased you. After this proof of  
 “my humanity, what was there extraordinary in my com-  
 “ing to see you in the way? I knew you not before; but  
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“ my religion teaches me to do good to all men, even to enemies, without reward, or without considering whether I ever should see them again.”

“ Now, after the drugs I sent you by Ibrahim, tell me, and tell me truly, upon the *faith* of an *Arab*, would your people, if they met me in the *desert*, do me any wrong, more than *now*, as I have eat and drank with you to-day ?”

THE old man Nimmer, on this rose from his carpet, and sat upright, a more ghastly and more horrid figure I never saw. “ No, said he, Shekh, cursed be those men of *my people*, or *others*, that ever shall lift up their hand against you, either in the *Desert* or the *Tell*, *i.e.* the part of Egypt which is cultivated. As long as you are in this country, or between this and Cossair, my son shall serve you with heart and hand; one night of pain that your medicines freed me from, would not be repaid, if I was to follow you on foot to Messir, that is Cairo.”

I THEN thought it a proper time to enter into conversation about penetrating into Abyssinia that way, and they discussed it among themselves in a very friendly, and at the same time in a very sagacious and sensible manner.

“ WE could carry you to *El Haimer*, (which I understood to be a well in the desert, and which I afterwards was much better acquainted with to my sorrow.) We could conduct you so far, says old Nimmer, under God, without fear of harm, all that country was Christian once, and *we* Christians



Christians like yourself \*. The *Saracens* having nothing in their power there, we could carry you safely to Suakem, but the Bishary are men not to be trusted, and we could go no farther than to land you among them, and they would put you to death, and laugh at you all the time they were tormenting you †. Now, if you want to visit Abyssinia, go by Cossair and Jidda, there *you Christians* command the country."

"I TOLD him, I apprehended, the *Kennoufs*, about the second cataract, above Ibrim, were bad people. He said the *Kennoufs* were, he believed, bad enough in their hearts, but they were wretched slaves, and servants, had no power in their hands, would not wrong any body that was with his people; if they did, he would extirpate them in a day."

"I TOLD him, I was satisfied of the truth of what was said, and asked him the best way to Cossair. He said, the best way for me to go, was from Kenné, or Cuft, and that he was carrying a quantity of wheat from Upper Egypt, while Shekh Hamam was sending another cargo from his country, both which would be delivered at Cossair, and loaded there for Jidda."

"ALL that is right, Shekh, said I, but suppose your people meet us in the desert, in going to Cossair, or otherwise, how should we fare in that case? Should we fight?" "I have

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told

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\* They were *Shepherds* Indigenæ, not Arabs.

† *Qui Ludit in Hospite fixo*—Was a character long ago given to the Moors.



told you Shekh already, says he, Curfed be the man who lifts his hand againft you, or even does not defend and be-friend you, to his own lofs, were it Ibrahim my own fon."

I THEN told him I was bound to Coffeir, and that if I found myfelf in any difficulty, I hoped, upon applying to his people, they would protect me, and that he would give them the word, that I was *yagoubé*, a phyfician, feeking no harm, but doing good; bound by a vow, for a certain time, to wander through deferts, from fear of God, and that they fhould not have it in their power to do me harm.

THE old man muttered fomewhat to his fons in a dialect I did not then underftand; it was that of the *Shepherds* of Suakem. As that was the firft word he fpoke, which I did not comprehend, I took no notice, but mixed fome lime-water in a large Venetian bottle that was given me when at Cairo full of *liqueur*, and which would hold about four quarts; and a little after I had done this the whole hut was filled with people.

THERE were *priefts* and *monks* of their religion, and the heads of families, fo that the houfe could not contain half of them. The great people among them came, and, after joining hands, repeated a kind of \* prayer, of about two minutes long, by which they declared themfelves, and their children, accurfed, if ever they lifted their hands againft me in the *Tell*, or Field in the *defert*, or on the river; or, in cafe that I, or mine fhould fly  
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\* This kind of oath was in ufe among the Arabs, or *Shepherds*, early as the time of Abraham, Gen. xxi. 22, 23, xxvi. 28.

to them for refuge, if they did not protect us at the risk of their lives, their families, and their fortunes, or, as they emphatically expressed it, to the death of the last male child among them.

MEDICINES and advice being given on my part, faith and protection pledged on theirs, two bushels of wheat and seven sheep were carried down to the boat, nor could we decline their kindness, as refusing a present in that country (however it is understood in ours,) is just as great an affront, as coming into the presence of a superior without a present at all.

I TOLD them, however, that I was going up among Turks who were *obliged* to maintain me, the consequence therefore will be, to save their own, that they will take your sheep, and make my dinner of them; you and I are *Arabs*, and know what *Turks* are. They all muttered curses between their teeth at the name of Turk, and we agreed they should keep the sheep till I came back, provided they should be then at liberty to add as many more.

THIS was all understood between us, and we parted perfectly content with one another. But our Rais was very far from being satisfied, having heard something of the seven sheep; and as we were to be next day at Syene, where he knew we were to get meat enough, he reckoned that they would have been his property. To stifle all cause of discontent, however, I told him he was to take no notice of my visit to Shekh Ammer, and that I would make him amends when I returned.

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 CHAP. VII.

*Arrives at Syene—Goes to see the Cataract—Remarkable Tombs—the situation of Syene—The Aga proposes a Visit to Deir and Ibrim—The Author returns to Kenné.*

WE failed on the 20th, with the wind favouring us, till about an hour before sun-rise, and about nine o'clock came to an anchor on the south end of the palm groves, and north end of the town of Syene, nearly opposite to an island in which there is a small handsome Egyptian temple, pretty entire. It is the temple of \* *Cnuphis*, where formerly was the Nilometer.

ADJOINING to the palm trees was a very good comfortable house, belonging to Houssein Schourbatchie, the man that used to be sent from that place to Cairo, to receive the pay of the janissaries in garrison at Syene, upon whom too I had credit for a very small sum.

THE reasons of a credit in such a place are three: First, in case of sickness, or purchase of any antiquities: Secondly, that you give the people an idea (a very useful one) that you carry no money about with you: Thirdly, that your money

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\* Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 944.

money changes its value, and is not even current beyond Efné.

HUSSEIN was not at home, but was gone somewhere upon business, but I had hopes to find him in the course of the day. Hospitality is never refused, in these countries, upon the slightest pretence. Having therefore letters to him, and hearing his house was empty, we sent our people and baggage to it.

I WAS not well arrived before a janissary came, in long Turkish cloaths, without arms, and a white wand in his hand, to tell me that Syene was a garrison town, and that the Aga was at the castle ready to give me audience.

I RETURNED him for answer, that I was very sensible it was my first duty, as a stranger, to wait upon the Aga in a *garrisoned* town of which he had the command, but, being bearer of the Grand Signior's Firman, having letters from the Bey of Cairo, and from the Port of Janissaries *to him in particular*, and, at present being indisposed and fatigued, I hoped he would indulge me till the arrival of my landlord; in which interim I should take a little rest, change my cloaths, and be more in the situation in which I would wish to pay my respects to him.

I RECEIVED immediately an answer by two janissaries, who insisted to see me, and were accordingly introduced while I was lying down to rest. They said that Mahomet Aga had received my message, that the reason of sending to me was  
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not either to hurry or disturb me; but the earlier to know in what he could be of service to me; that he had a *particular letter* from the Bey of Cairo, in consequence of which, he had dispatched orders to receive me at Efné, but as I had not waited on the Cacheff there, he had not been apprised.

AFTER giving coffee to these very civil messengers, and taking two hours rest, our landlord the Schourbatchie arrived; and, about four o'clock in the afternoon, we went to the Aga.

THE fort is built of clay, with some small guns mounted on it; it is of strength sufficient to keep people of the country in awe.

I FOUND the Aga sitting in a small kioosk, or closet, upon a stone-bench covered with carpets. As I was in no fear of him, I was resolved to walk according to my privileges; and, as the meanest Turk would do before the greatest man in England, I sat down upon a cushion below him, after laying my hand on my breast, and saying in an audible voice, with great marks of respect, however, *Salam alicum!* to which he answered, without any of the usual difficulty, *Alicum salam!* *Peace be between us* is the salutation; *There is peace between us* is the return.

AFTER sitting down about two minutes, I again got up, and stood in the middle of the room before him, saying, I am bearer of a *hatésherriffe*, or royal mandate, to you, Mahomet Aga! and took the firman out of my bosom, and presented it to him. Upon this he stood upright, and all the rest of the people, before sitting with him likewise; he bowed his head

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upon the carpet, then put the firman to his forehead, opened it, and pretended to read it; but he knew well the contents, and I believe, besides, he could neither read nor write any language. I then gave him the other letters from Cairo, which he ordered his secretary to read in his ear.

ALL this ceremony being finished, he called for a pipe, and coffee. I refused the first, as never using it; but I drank a dish of coffee, and told him, that I was bearer of a *confidential message* from Ali Bey of Cairo, and wished to deliver it to him without witnesses, whenever he pleased. The room was accordingly cleared without delay, excepting his secretary, who was also going away, when I pulled him back by the cloaths, saying, "Stay, if you please, we shall need you to write the answer." We were no sooner left alone, than I told the Aga, that, being a stranger, and not knowing the disposition of his people, or what footing they were on together, and being desired to address myself only to him by the Bey, and our mutual friends at Cairo, I wished to put it in his power (as he pleased or not) to have witnesses of delivering the small *present* I had brought him from Cairo. The Aga seemed very sensible of this delicacy; and particularly desired me to take no notice to my landlord, the Schourbatchie, of any thing I had brought him.

ALL this being over, and a *confidence* established with government, I sent his present by his own servant that night, under pretence of desiring horses to go to the cataract next day. The message was returned, that the horses were to be ready by six o'clock next morning. On the 21st, the Aga sent me his own horse, with mules and asses for my servants, to go to the cataract.

WE passed out at the fourth gate of the town, into the first small sandy plain. A very little to our left, there are a number of tomb-stones with inscriptions in the Cufic character, which travellers erroneously have called *unknown* language, and letters, although it was the only letter and language known to Mahomet, and the most learned of his sect in the first ages.

THE Cufic characters seem to be all written in capitals, which one might learn to read much more easily than the modern Arabic, and they more resemble the Samaritan. We read there—Abdullah el Hejazi el Anfari—Mahomet Abdel Shems el Taiefy el Anfari. The first of these, Abdullah el Hejazi, is Abdullah born in Arabia Petrea. The other is, Mahomet the slave of the sun, born in Taief. Now, both of these are called *Anfari*, which many writers, upon Arabian history, think, means, *born in Medina*; because, when Mahomet fled from Mecca, the night of the hegira, the people of Medina received him willingly, and thenceforward got the name of \*Anfari, or Helpers. But this honourable name was extended afterwards to all those who fought under Mahomet in his wars, and after, even to those who had been born in his lifetime.

THESE of whose tombs we are now speaking, were of the army of Haled Ibn el Waalid, whom Mahomet named, Saif Ullah, the 'Sword of God,' and who, in the califat of Omar, took and destroyed Syene, after losing great part of his army before

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\* This word, improperly used and spelled by M. de Volney, has nothing to do with these Anfaris.

before it. It was afterwards rebuilt by the *Shepherds* of Beja, then Christians, and again taken in the time of Salidan, and, with the rest of Egypt, *ever since* hath belonged to Cairo. It was conquered by, or rather surrendered to, Selim Emperor of the Turks, in 1516, who planted two advanced posts (Deir and Ibrim) beyond the cataract in Nubia, with small garrisons of janissaries likewise, where they continue to this day.

THEIR pay is issued from Cairo; sometimes they marry each others daughters, rarely marry the women of the country, and the son, or nephew, or nearest relation of each deceased, succeeds as janissary in room of his father. They have lost their native language, and have indeed nothing of the Turk in them, but a propensity to violence, rapine, and injustice; to which they have joined the perfidy of the Arab, which, as I have said, they sometimes inherit from their mother. An Aga commands these troops in the castle. They have about two hundred horsemen armed with firelocks; with which, by the help of the Ababdé, encamped at Shekh Ammer, they keep the Bishareen, and all these numerous tribes of Arabs, that inhabit the Desert of Sennaar, in tolerable order.

THE inhabitants, merchants, and common people of the town, are commanded by a cacheff. There is neither butter nor milk at Syene (the latter comes from Lower Egypt) the same may be said of fowls. Dates do not ripen at Syene, those that are sold at Cairo come from Ibrim and Dongola. There are good fish in the Nile, and they are easily caught, especially at the cataract, or in broken water; there are only two kinds of large ones which I have happened to see, the



binny and the boulti. The binny I have described in its proper place.

AFTER passing the tomb-stones without the gate, we come to a plain about five miles long, bordered on the left by a hill of no considerable height, and sandy like the plain, upon which are seen some ruins, more modern than those Egyptian buildings we have described. They seem indeed to be a mixture of all kinds and ages.

THE distance from the gate of the town to Termiffi, or Marada, the small villages on the cataract, is exactly six English miles. After the description already given of this cataract in some authors, a traveller has reason to be surprised, when arrived on its banks, to find that vessels fail up the cataract, and consequently the fall cannot be so violent as to deprive people of their hearing\*.

THE bed of the river, occupied by the water, was not then half a mile broad. It is divided into a number of small channels, by large blocks of granite, from thirty to forty feet high. The current, confined for a long course between the rocky mountains of Nubia, tries to expand itself with great violence. Finding, in every part before it, opposition from the rocks of granite, and forced back by these, it meets the opposite currents. The chafing of the water against these huge obstacles, the meeting of the contrary currents one with another, creates such a violent ebullition, and makes

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\* Cicero de Somnio Scipionis.

makes such a noise and disturbed appearance, that it fills the mind with confusion rather than with terror.

WE saw the miserable Kennoufs (who inhabit the banks of the river up into Nubia, to above the second cataract) to procure their daily food, lying behind rocks, with lines in their hands, and catching fish; they did not seem to be either dexterous or successful in the sport. They are not black, but of the darkest brown; are not woolly-headed, but have hair. They are small, light, agile people, and seem to be more than half-starved. I made a sign that I wanted to speak with one of them; but seeing me surrounded with a number of horse and fire-arms, they did not choose to trust themselves. I left my people behind with my firelock, and went alone to see if I could engage them in a conversation. At first they walked off; finding I persisted in following them, they ran at full speed, and hid themselves among the rocks.

PLINY\* says, that, in his time, the city of Syene was situated so directly under the tropic of Cancer, that there was a well, into which the sun shone so perpendicular, that it was enlightened by its rays down to the bottom. Strabo† had said the same. The ignorance, or negligence, in the Geodesique measure in this observation, is extraordinary; Egypt had been measured yearly, from early ages, and the distance between Syene and Alexandria should have been known to an ell. From this inaccuracy, I do very much suspect the other measure Eratosthenes is said to have made, by which he fixed the sun's parallax at 10 seconds and a  
v. i. u half,

\* Pliny, lib. ii. cap. 73.

† Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 944.